

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, August 20. 1709.

WELL, Good People, and what do you think the Czar of *Muscovy* will do with Count *Piper* now, if he has him? As *the News from thence says*, he has.

I confess, I am an Enemy to all Sorts of Cruelty—and must acknowledge, I think, the cruel Execution of General *PAIKUL*, to be a most dishonourable Thing; who, tho' a Man of Quality, a Person of great Honour, and a Soldier, was in spight of many Intercessions, and as a peculiar Insult to the Czar and King *Augustus*, broken alive upon the Wheel, and, as we were told in the publick Accounts, was kept three Days a dying in the most miserable Torment

imaginable, without being allow'd the common Favour of the *Coup de Grace*.

Again, I think, but mark it, 'tis but my private Opinion, that it was a most barbarous Thing, and to the last Degree *GOTHICK*, as one observ'd, to compel King *Augustus* to surrender that Gentleman to his implacable Enemy; he was no Prisoner of War, nor any Deserter from the *Swedish Army*; but in a publick Character from the Czar to King *Augustus*; and that King, who is one of the most generous Princes in the World, was forc'd with infinite Regret, and after most earnest Representations of its being against the Law of Nations, to deliver him up, to save the Destruction of his Country.

Upon

Upon the Death of this unfortunate Gentleman, the Czar declar'd he would give no Quarter to the *Swedes*, and the *Swedes* the like to the *Muscovites*; and so the War went on like *a-la mode* Butchery.

Now I must needs observe, that since this barbarous Action, *I have remark'd it*, the King of *S. . . n* has had no Success— The Hand of Heaven has seem'd to be turn'd against him every-where; he has been worsted upon every Occasion, and had not the Humanity of the *Muscovites* exceeded *what it us'd to be*, the *Swedish* Gentlemen had paid dear for the Blood of General *PATKUL* on several Occasions. But more particularly in this last Action, should the Czar resent it upon the Prisoners he has taken, it would be a terrible Warning to all Princes that make War, not to extend their Arms to Barbarities and cold Blood Destructions, lest they live to see it reveng'd on their best Friends, and their bravest Officers sometime or other fall a Sacrifice to appease the angry Ghosts of the Dead.

But after all, What shall we say to Count *Piper*? And what will the Czar do with him? Especially if he was the Man, that order'd, council'd, and appointed that horrible Execution of poor *PATKUL*, as they say he was—— I suppose, the Czar of *Muscovy* will be far enough from any Influence from this Paper—— But certainly if it be first true, that this *PIPER* was the Actor of that Tragedy, he merits All that Hands can inflict; and if compleat Retaliation were to be made—he should be first sent back to King *Augustus*, that the Injury to him should be repair'd, and then broke alive upon the Wheel, on the same individual Spot of Ground that *PATKUL* was executed, and in the same Manner.

This, I say, would be *Lex Talionis*, the Perfection of retaliating Justice—— And really, if the Czar of *Muscovy* does not do something like this, if he does not use his Prisoners like Men taken after Quarter was forbidden, and like Men that had resolv'd to give no Quarter to his Subjects if they had been Victors——

If he does not use them thus, I say, he shows himself to be a Prince of more Humanity and Generosity, than the *Swedes* have Reason to expect, or than Fame has represented him.

It has been observable, that this War between the *Swede*, King *Augustus*, and the Czar, has been carry'd on with unusual Animosity; Blood, and Revenge, has seem'd to be the particular Temper that has reign'd on both sides, but especially the *Swedes*—— To give no Quarter in Fight, no Terms to Men of Honour, that fall into our Hands, has something particularly inhuman in it—and seems to be altogether ravenous and brutal; few Nations ever did it—— Nor is any War to be carry'd on upon such Terms, but what is made merely to depopulate and destroy Mankind—— It is not conquering, but ravaging and tearing to pieces, nor is it consistent with the Nature of Man, especially as Christian—— The *Saxon* Soldiers taken at *Thorn*, after a long Siege, and a brave Defence, discharging thereby the Part of Men of Honour, and showing an unshaken Fidelity to their Prince: Let the *Swedes* say for themselves, if they are not asham'd of it, how they were us'd; of which our publick Accounts told us, that they suffer'd them to starve on Board their Ships, with Cold and Hunger, refusing them the Consolation, either of Physicians for the Bodies of their Sick Men, or Divines for their Souls—— What these Things may have brought upon the whole Body of that People, and their Prince also, *I will not say*; but certainly, since the cruel Death of that miserable Gentleman as above, Heaven has seem'd to abandon the *Swede*, and they have prosper'd in nothing, till at last they have lost the bravest little Army in *Europe*. The Great Authors of this ill prosecuted War are fallen into the Hand of their Enemy, and find themselves reduc'd to the Necessity of asking Mercy of those very *Muscovites*, to whom on all Occasions they have shew'd so little—— If they find good Usage there, I shall wonder, and must say, 'tis what they have very little Reason to expect.

MISCELLANEA.

J Have heard with a great Deal of Patience, the *French King* rail'd at, and plentifully abus'd for this last Week or two, because he would not ratifie the Capitulation of the Citadel of *Tournay*——

And I cannot but take the Liberty to advocate for his most Christian Majesty a little in this Case—— As to his Honour in observing Treaties and Capitulations when made, it is not much to the Purpose here; but whatever he does with Treaties, when they are made, you never found him a Fail at making them: And from the Beginning, I must confess, I wonder'd at Mr. *DeTurville*, that he should make such a Proposal as this—— He could never think his Master would sign it—— He is far from being ignorant of the Condition of the Confederate Armies, for he has felt their vigorous Attacks both at *Lille* and at *Tournay*—— and he cannot be perfectly ignorant of the Condition of his Masters Troops; and from both he might easily judge, that as soon as ever the Capitulation of the Citadel of *Tournay* should be sign'd, the Confederate Army would march directly to attack his Masters Army, or have a full Liberty to form another Siege, perhaps of *Mons*, or *Ypres*; the Taking of which would be fatal to the Kings Affairs, and serve to expose his Frontiers more to the Invasion of the Allies, which must at last end in his entire Destruction, if not not prevented by a dishonourable Peace——

On the other hand, so long as he can defend the Citadel, which it is suppos'd he may do, very near the Time that he offer'd the Capitulation, the innumerable Mines under all the Works, rendring the Approach by any way but the Sap impracticable; so long the Confederates Hands are ty'd from any considerable Attempt, and so much Time gain'd towards the Spining out this Campaign, a Thing on which the whole Safety of *France* so much depends.

In my Opinion then, it had been an unaccountable Folly, and the falsest Step imaginable in the *French*, if they had let that Capitulation been confirm'd—— And it is a full Evidence of the Badness of their Circumstances, that they have not done it—— It is plain, they dare not do it—— they dare not trust their own Fortunes with a Months Liberty to our Armies; they will not venture it—— they'll rather purchase a Month, at the Expence of the whole Garrison of *Tournay*, than hazard being attack'd by the Confederates, and leave them at Liberty for one Month to attack, either their Army in its strongest Intrenchments, or some other of their strong Frontiers, in which now their whole Safety depends.

All these Things, I say, betray the Weakness of the *French*, and confirm the Accounts, we have of the Extremities they are driven to—— As to the Terms of Peace, which turn upon the Affair of *Spain*, I cannot doubt, but that Thing will soon determine it self; for if you can, as we see it in a fair way of doing, remove *French* Influence from *Spanish* Councils, and perhaps you won't find such Difficulties in reducing *Spain*, as some People imagine.

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